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SIPDIS

STATE FOR ECA/PE/V/M ALISON MOYLAN / AZZA MOUNIB-ZAKI;
NEA/PPD

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: PARTICIPANT EVALUATION FOR MRP "PERFORMING ARTS IN
U.S. SOCIETY," MARCH 10 - 31, 2005.

1. "Traveling to the U.S. is a dream come true" for Mr. Abdulla AlKooheji, who attended the "Performing Arts in U.S. Society," IVLP March 10-31, 2005. Meeting with the Cultural Affairs Assistant, Mr. AlKooheji described the three-week trip as overwhelming because it provided a rich opportunity to exchange knowledge and information about American theater and art. Mr Alkooheji was particularly impressed with the great appreciation that American artists, producers and directors have for their trade and hopes to spark the same in Bahrain.

2. Mr. Alkooheji, who participated in other regional and international professional exchange programs stressed the IVLP was unique in offering participants a wide range of experiences through workshops and lectures organized at various universities and art institutions around the U.S. He said that the many trips to arts institutions gave him a better and closer understanding of the American arts and culture, pointing out, that this is "this was a new and very appreciated experience." Cleveland and Kentucky visits, according to Mr. AlKooheji, were the most beneficial as they were "able to see many practical artistic activities".

3. He pointed out that the program enabled him to see the strong mutual respect between U.S. artists and the audience. He hopes that a similar relationship will be fostered in Bahrain in which producers and actors work hard to provide the best for their audience who dedicate their time to see a show. Mr. Alkooheji cited the program as an experience that he would "cherish for life because of the interaction among the various participating nationalities, the contact with U.S. directors and producers, and the opportunity to attend different American plays".

4. Mr. AlKooheji also made some thoughtful criticism on the program. He would have preferred more practical involvement of the participants and less theoretical emphasis, in particular in the program in Washington, San Francisco and New York. He also pointed out that the intensity of the program left little or no time for leisure activities. He has expressed great interest in nominating a member of his Awal Theater Group to any future cultural events sponsored by the U.S. State Department, and he would be more than happy to host any of the U.S. theater artists he had met to attend cultural festivals in Bahrain.

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